

JOSEPH HAD WHAT WE NEED

(Matthew 1:18-25)

I. We need Joseph's character.

- a. The word character is defined as: the aggregate of features and traits that form the individual nature of some person or thing.
- b. Joseph was a man of upstanding character.
- c. We know this because of what he showed of himself during a very difficult time.
 - i. Matthew 1:18-19.
 - ii. Joseph is called her husband.
 1. Espousal, which is the word used in verse 18, was a much stricter sense of engagement than that which is practiced today.
 2. In all senses but coming together physically as husband and wife, a couple who was espoused were considered married.
 3. This situation could last for up to a year.
 4. Only a divorce could break up this couple.
 - iii. No doubt Joseph was looking forward to the time that he could come together with his bride and they could live together as one.
 - iv. Then came word that his bride is pregnant.
 - v. In reality, the first time we meet Joseph, he was planning a divorce.
 - vi. I would imagine that in some ways, Joseph felt his life was falling apart.
 - vii. Joseph had two options:
 1. He could make her a public example, which entailed making her infidelity known and her being stoned to death,
 2. He could do things privately and give her a writing of divorcement.
 - viii. Joseph chose the avenue of mercy, which shows the character he possessed.
 - ix. This decision was made before he was told by the angel just how his bride came to be with child.
 1. Think of the things he could have said.
 2. Yet, we never read that he acted in or said anything in anger.
 3. We are aware of how people look at men or women who's spouses or significant others cheat on them.
 4. They are the talk of the town for a while and people haven't changed all that much in 2,000 years.
 5. No matter what hurtful things might have been said about him, he was not going to hurt Mary.
- d. What kind of character do we show others during difficult times?
 - i. Do we blame everyone else for our problems?
 - ii. Do we lash out in anger?

- iii. Do we go talk about the situation to anyone who will listen and run down whoever has hurt us?
- e. Verse 19 describes him as a just man.
 - i. This means God viewed him as righteous, which is how this word is often translated.
 - ii. He wasn't perfect of course, but he did his best to live as God would have him to live.
- f. God wants us to have the character of Joseph and live as God would have us to as best we can.

II. We need Joseph's confidence.

- a. One thing that stands out is that Joseph was confident in God.
- b. Notice Matthew 1:20-23.
- c. God had an angel speak to Joseph and reveal to him what was going on with Mary and the baby.
 - i. The angel revealed to Joseph that Mary was pregnant by miraculous means.
 - ii. What was occurring was a fulfillment of prophecy (Isaiah 7:14).
- d. No doubt that was difficult to understand for Joseph.
 - i. That prophecy was 700+ years old.
 - ii. Out of all the young ladies in Israel, his bride to be was the one chosen by God for the fulfillment of it.
- e. Joseph never questioned the truthfulness of the angel.
- f. Joseph had confidence in God's word.
- g. We must have confidence in God's word as well.
- h. We need to be confident that God guides us through that word.
 - i. Joseph was guided by an angel, which won't happen to us.
 - ii. However, God's word is still there to guide us.
 - iii. It is a lamp and a light.
 - iv. It is a standard to follow.
- i. We need to be confident in the virgin birth.
 - i. This is one of the most questioned doctrines of the Bible.
 - ii. Skeptics have long attacked this because if it isn't true, then the rest of the Bible falls.
 - iii. Also, because it is miraculous and many can't believe in anything miraculous.
 - iv. I read of an account of a skeptic coming up to a preacher who had just preached on the virgin birth and challenging him on it.
 - 1. He said, "I don't believe that story and neither do you."
 - 2. The preacher said that he did and the skeptic asked, "If a young woman came to you saying she was six months pregnant and this is my boyfriend the only one I've ever had. He has never touched

me and I conceived this baby miraculously, would you believe her”?

3. The preacher said, “Yes I would”.
4. He paused, and then added, “I would believe it if that birth had been foretold by prophets hundreds of years before the baby was conceived. I would if the boyfriend had been visited by an angel and told to not be afraid to marry her because the child was conceived by the Holy Spirit. I would if when the baby was born wise men travelled from afar to see him and worship him. I would if her son had power over the wind and waves, death and disease. I would if that son went up on a mountain and visibly went back to heaven, and if his disciples 2,000 years later were numbered more than the sands of the shore, I would believe it.

v. The Bible presents the virgin birth of Jesus and we need to have confidence in it just as Joseph did.

- j. We must have confidence that the baby was sent to save mankind.
 - i. The angel told Joseph that the baby would one day save His people from their sins.
 - ii. Joseph didn’t balk at that idea at all.
 - iii. He had confidence in God’s word about this child being the Savior of the world.
 - iv. Man is born into a sinful world and eventually, that sin gets into the life of every one of us.
 - v. We all have a sin problem and Joseph had confidence in the fact that this baby could deal with that problem for man because God’s messenger told him He would.
- k. Joseph had confidence in God’s word and we all need the same confidence today.

III. We need Joseph’s care for others.

- a. Because Joseph possessed good character and had confidence in God’s word, he showed care for Mary and the baby.
- b. Matthew 1:24-25.
- c. He took Mary to be his wife because he believed what he was told.
- d. Joseph did the right thing in this situation.
 - i. Think where Mary would have been without Joseph.
 - ii. In those days, a divorced woman with a child would have been in great distress.
- e. He got Mary safely to Bethlehem, where she ended up having the baby.
- f. He cared for them both in getting them to Egypt.
- g. When you go to Luke 2, he cared enough about the baby to follow the Mosaic Law when it came to circumcision, offering the cleansing sacrifice for Mary.

- h.** It seems obvious that Joseph made sure to have Jesus in the synagogue on the sabbath, learning God's word as a child.
- i.** The last time we see Joseph, he had his family in Jerusalem for the Passover feast (Luke 2:41) and we are told that he did every year.
- j.** Joseph was a man who cared for others and we need this characteristic in our lives.

Not an original outline but source unknown